

AD-A049 816 ARMY WAR COLL STRATEGIC STUDIES INST CARLISLE BARRACKS PA F/6 5/4  
A NEW LOOK AT FRANCE: US DEFENSE INTERESTS IN A CHANGING ENVIRO--ETC(U)  
NOV 77 K E ROBERTS

UNCLASSIFIED

NL

| OF |  
AD  
A049816



END  
DATE  
FILED  
3-78  
DDC

AD A049816

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE  
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

10 NOV 1977

12 24 p.

ACN 77042

6 A NEW LOOK AT FRANCE:  
US DEFENSE INTERESTS  
IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT.

10 Kenneth E. Roberts

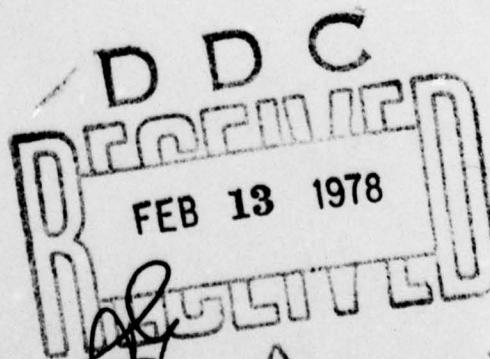


9 MILITARY ISSUES RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

AD NO.

DDC FILE COPY

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT:  
Approved for public release;  
distribution unlimited.



390 230

**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE  
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania**

**A NEW LOOK AT FRANCE:  
US DEFENSE INTERESTS  
IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

**by**

**Kenneth E. Roberts**

**10 November 1977**

**DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT:  
Approved for public release;  
distribution unlimited.**

## **DISCLAIMER**

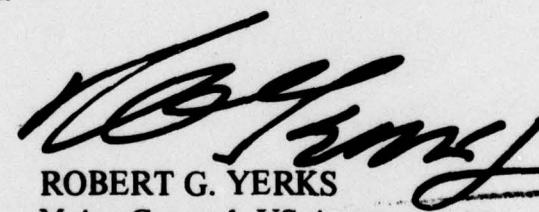
**The views of the author do not purport to reflect the position of the Department of the Army or Department of Defense.**

## FOREWORD

This memorandum considers the rapid political and economic changes in France which could fundamentally affect NATO and relationships with the United States. Recent polls have indicated increased support for a leftist coalition, while at the same time a new phase of French politics is developing with the coalescence of the anti-left Gaullist block into a mass movement behind former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac. Attention is being focused on parliamentary elections in 1978 and the presidential election scheduled for 1981. The author concludes that, whatever the course of events, US policy should be to prevent France from becoming anti-American and moving closer to the Soviet Union, and to support the preservation of democratic principles through economic and diplomatic policies.

The Military Issues Research Memoranda program of the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, provides a means for timely dissemination of analytical papers which are not necessarily constrained by format or conformity with institutional policy. These memoranda are prepared on subjects of current importance in areas related to the author's professional work or interests.

This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.



ROBERT G. YERKS  
Major General, US Army  
Commanding

W718	White Section <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
O-10	Buff Section <input type="checkbox"/>
SHELF NUMBER	
JULY 1980	
VERIFICATION	
BY	
DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY CODES	
DISP.	AVAIL. and/or SPECIAL
A	

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

**MR. KENNETH E. ROBERTS** is a social scientist with the US Government Accounting Office. From 1973 until February 1977 he was a member of the Strategic Studies Institute. Mr. Roberts holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from the American University and a master's degree in international affairs from Florida State University. He has contributed to published compendiums dealing with international security.

## **A NEW LOOK AT FRANCE: US DEFENSE INTERESTS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

France, America's first ally, has recovered from its defeat by Germany in World War II, and its subsequent loss of a colonial empire, without losing either its national pride or its industrial and cultural strength and influence. Despite serious economic problems shared with the rest of the Western World, France retains, for a variety of reasons, a greater self-sufficiency and ability to share worldwide burdens than perhaps any other US ally.

Although no longer a member of the NATO integrated military commands, France is vital to the defense of Western Europe and cooperates with NATO members on most defense issues. French defense expenditures are increasing and support for military preparedness is strong.

Despite periods of occasional tension, US relations with France have improved significantly under the leadership of French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing. France, like most of Western Europe, however, is currently undergoing rapid political and economic changes which could fundamentally affect relationships with the United States and the future of NATO. In the 1974 presidential elections, Socialist leader Francois Mitterand won 49.3 percent of the vote as the candidate of a

Socialist-Communist coalition against Giscard d'Estaing's 50.6 percent. Recent polls and local elections have indicated increased support for a leftist coalition.

The French Communist Party (PCF) has become an increasingly legitimate symbol of political activity and thought, and the electoral strength of the Socialist Party (PS) has steadily increased under Mitterand's leadership. Today, despite major differences between the French Communists and Socialists, the lines between the left and right in France are perhaps more clearly drawn than anywhere else in Western Europe. Currently the left and right are roughly equal in strength.

A new phase of French politics is now developing with the coalescence of the anti-left Gaullist bloc into a mass movement behind 44-year old, charismatic former Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac. The common perception is that anything can now happen, but an even greater polarization between the left and right in France seems inevitable. Chirac initiated his campaign in December 1976, by reiterating familiar Gaullist themes, such as national independence and distance from both superpowers. He appears to seek a direct, head-on confrontation with the leftists. This is in opposition to the strategy of President Giscard d'Estaing, who has been attempting to build a center coalition by attracting moderates from both the right and left. Chirac and Giscard differ little on domestic problems and programs to solve them, but Giscard's comfortable, intellectual optimism is in sharp contrast to Chirac's emotional nationalism.

Chirac resigned as Prime Minister on August 25, 1976, because of fundamental disagreement with Giscard over strategy to confront the leftist challenge. He has stated, however, that his new movement would "remain within the majority" that supports the current center coalition government in the Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

Recent political speculation in France has focused on parliamentary elections in 1978 and the presidential election scheduled for 1981. It now appears likely that a presidential vote will occur sooner. Both the political and economic situation are currently extremely complex and volatile. Although France is a pillar of Western democracy and culture, changes in political direction there always seem to come about through dramatic crises. The outcomes and implications of current trends and developments are extremely important for US policy, security, and psychological outlook. France is unlikely to rejoin NATO militarily, but if an anti-US leftist coalition government can be avoided, closer

US-French cooperation could benefit the Western defense posture in Europe and elsewhere. Either the leftist alternative or the growth of supranationalism would probably endanger this result and could threaten major international power readjustments.

### THE US-FRENCH CONNECTION

Despite France's crucial intervention in the US Revolutionary War, a recent poll indicates that only seven percent of the general public in the United States today consider France to be America's best ally in a world crisis. By comparison, 34 percent expressed that confidence in Britain and 33 percent in Germany. They also placed France behind West Germany, Britain, and the Netherlands in future economic importance, and indicated they did not consider France's contribution to US history particularly important.<sup>2</sup> Much of the anti-French content of US public opinion can be directly attributed to General Charles de Gaulle's personality, his foreign policy approach, and his withdrawal of France's Armed Forces from NATO joint military command in 1967. Both US and French pride and independence have prevented mutually beneficial cooperation since de Gaulle's death.

Nevertheless, in spite of France's internal political situation and continued cultural competitiveness with the United States, US-French relations are better than they have been in years. This improvement can be attributed to a number of factors, including:

- an end to the US involvement in Indochina;
- agreement by France to ban future exports of nuclear fuel-reprocessing plants which have the potential to produce plutonium for weapons;
- agreement by the United States that dollar exchange rates and the US economy should be managed to help improve economic conditions throughout the developed world;
- agreement on the role of gold in international economics;
- increased cooperation in military maneuvers and the change in French strategy favoring an improvement in conventional defenses;
- cooperation between the United States and France in solving world problems of mutual concern, including the serious economic problems of southern Europe, the increase in internal Communist strength in the region, and the search for peace in the Middle East;
- US acceptance of France's offer of \$100 million as full settlement for the relocation of US forces and bases committed to NATO in 1967

when de Gaulle withdrew French military participation from NATO; and,

- agreement by Presidents Ford and Giscard d'Estaing in Martinique (January 1975) that France's cooperation with NATO is a significant factor in Europe's security.

Today, the French Navy frequently contributes to joint exercises in the Mediterranean. It has the largest permanent fleet in the Indian Ocean, and it is by far the greatest military user of the Panama Canal.<sup>3</sup> France has become very disturbed by increasing Soviet naval strength in the Mediterranean and recently reinforced its Mediterranean fleet. Two carriers, the Foch and the Clemenceau, each with about 40 aircraft, now are based in Toulon.<sup>4</sup> The French have also expressed great concern over Soviet and Warsaw Pact military expansion and the Soviet Union's growing involvement in Africa.

In an address before the US Congress on May 18, 1976, President Valery Giscard d'Estaing stated that "France will continue her action in the future loyal to her commitments. She will continue to contribute to the effectiveness of the Atlantic alliance, of which she is a part."<sup>5</sup> DeGaulle's successors have not reversed his earlier policies, but France has slowly shifted toward a more relaxed attitude and expanded contacts with NATO. Under de Gaulle, all French staff were withdrawn from NATO's joint headquarters except for technical liaison personnel left to ensure code and procedural integration in an emergency. France continues to insist on military autonomy, but working level relations between French and NATO officials are very good. Old suspicions and misunderstandings have been slowly replaced by more directness and cooperation. The French have also agreed to participate in a new body called the European Program Group (EPG), formed to improve coordination in the production and procurement of arms and equipment.<sup>6</sup>

Although French coordination with NATO is not highly publicized, according to most reports,

France is maintaining regular technical contacts, participating in some international armament programmes and making on the spot assessments of joint NATO exercises, plans, and procedures. There has also been an exchange of information as a prelude to an eventual coordination at command level. The general staffs are now examining the possibility of France having to take part—following a governmental decision—in operations alongside other NATO forces, principally in the air and on sea. With this in view, the French command has been asked to make it possible for such participation in NATO activities, alongside the organisation and not within it as complete integration would require.<sup>7</sup>

In a recent interview in *Journal Defense Nationale*, the French Army Chief of Staff, General Guy Mery, expressed a growing change in French strategy which officially blesses France's participation on a NATO front line in case of war.<sup>8</sup>

France also has announced significant increases in defense expenditures for the period 1977-82. The new program which emphasizes the improvement of conventional military forces ties in very closely with NATO plans for the period and has resulted in increased debate about whether France is moving toward a closer relationship with NATO. During the next five years the defense share of the French budget will increase from 17 to 20 percent, resulting in a 128 percent increase in annual defense spending (in current francs/dollars). Spending for nuclear developments will remain high, but spending for conventional weapons will be much greater than in the past. French Army conventional forces will be updated, emphasizing self-propelled artillery, new antitank weapons, and advanced antiaircraft weaponry.<sup>9</sup>

Official French policy, nevertheless, remains "to cooperate with NATO forces in case of attack from the East but to preserve at any time her freedom to resort to the *force de frappe* (nuclear striking force) without prior consultations and structured understandings with her allies."<sup>10</sup> No one is really seriously suggesting that France rejoin the peacetime military structure of NATO. With both the left-wing Socialist and Communist groups and the right-wing Gaullists strongly opposed to French reintegration and perceived surrender of French sovereignty and independence to the United States, President Giscard d'Estaing cannot go much further in improving France's relationship to NATO. In addition, France has continued to refuse to accept a role in a NATO defense line on the West German-Czech border.

For these and other reasons, French forces would probably not be in the vanguard of European defense in the event of attack from the East. In a major war, however, the United States and the other members of NATO can now reasonably expect strong, relatively quick support from French forces. That support is very important to the security of both the United States and Western Europe.

In addition to its military importance to the United States, France is also important because of its advanced state of technology and industrialization and its vital role in furthering European unity through the European Common Market and other institutions. Its continued strong political, cultural, and economic influence in the Third World, especially in the Middle East and Africa, are extremely important assets for the West in challenging Soviet expansion in such regions.

## ECONOMICS, VALUES, AND CHANGE

France, in the midst of an unpopular austerity program, continues to suffer from serious economic problems. The current inflation rate is approximately 11 percent yearly, which is more than double West Germany's rate. Successive devaluations of the franc have stimulated inflation at home more than exports abroad. The result has been an increasingly large balance of payments deficit. Unemployment remains at the highest level since World War II. Since 1975, the national income has declined by 1.52 percent while industrial wages continue to increase.

Acceptance of a capital gains tax is still difficult for most Frenchmen, resulting in an extremely unequal distribution of income and tax burden. According to a recent study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), France has the largest rich-poor gap among all Western industrialized countries. According to the study, the richest 20 percent in France get nearly 47 percent of the post-tax household income. Another OECD report shows France's 16 percent poverty rate to be higher than that of most other OECD members.<sup>11</sup>

Key French institutions such as the family, the school, the administrative-bureaucratic apparatus, and the traditional respect for authority, continue to temper the volatile nature of the French character. Attachment to such values, however, could eventually be eroded by social changes and economic discontent. It is this phenomenon which has led to an increased desire for change and which offers to the French left its greatest opportunity to achieve power.

## THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY

The French Communist Party, second largest only to Italy's in Western Europe, has consistently polled between 20 to 25 percent of the vote in elections since World War II. The Party has not participated as part of a French government, however, since 1947. In the past few years, French Party leader George Marchais has attempted to gradually liberalize the Party under the new slogan, "Socialism in French Colors," in order to change its image from one of the most dogmatically rigid, pro-Moscow Communist parties in the world.

In 1970, Marchais initiated negotiation for a leftist alliance. The French Communists and Socialists agreed on a joint platform and

created a "union of the left," the first popular front effort since 1936 when a similar alliance failed. It calls for the nationalization of major industries, greater national planning, improved social services, and greater rights for French workers.

The strength of the French Communist Party lies in the Paris "Red Belt," (the working class suburbs which surround the city), among the industrial workers in the north, farmers in the economically depressed central and southern regions, as well as many students, teachers, and intellectuals throughout the country. Current party membership is around 500,000. Membership drives have sought to recruit 100,000 more members with a so-called "open heart" policy which welcomes all applicants. More than three-fourths of the current membership has joined since 1968, and the average member's age is between 30 and 35.<sup>12</sup>

The French Communist Party has been able to retain the support of a nearly constant percentage of the electorate because of its influence in the labor movement controlling France's largest union, and its perception as the party of protest. Many Frenchmen view the nation's social structure as indeed being divided by highly antagonistic classes. The majority of them are not enemies of democracy, but for a variety of reasons they feel there is no other realistic alternative for reform.

Once one of the most hard-line, pro-Soviet groups in Western Europe, the French Communist Party has become increasingly liberal in recent years. The new reforms are based on support for a parliamentary, multiparty system with free elections; nonviolent means to revolution; abandonment of the concept of "dictatorship of the proletariat"; and respect for individual liberties and human rights. The French Communist Party, in an attempt to gain broader support and increased legitimacy, has appealed to such diverse groups as the Gaullists, the environmentalists, Roman Catholics, and supporters of the luxury Concorde aircraft program.

The Party operates under three significant constraints. First, by comparison to Italy, particularly, conditions in France are not too bad. The economic outlook is better and is improving; public services and tax collection are more efficient; and political corruption is less of a problem. Secondly, the French Communists increasingly are being forced into a secondary role in the leftist coalition by the electoral success of their Socialist partners. Italian Socialists, by contrast, are divided, weak, and much less of a threat. Finally, the French Communists must still face considerable skepticism from the French

general public over their recent, rather quick conversion to democratic principles and independence from Moscow. These newly adopted policies are positions which the Italian Communist Party has supported with greater credibility for much longer. The French Communists defended Moscow even through the infamous Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Italians, by contrast, have engaged in independent policies and debate since 1948, and bitterly criticized the Soviet Union for the Czech invasion. In addition, there is also some evidence that there is still a hard-line contingent within the French Communist Party which opposes the recent changes brought about by George Marchais.<sup>13</sup>

Nearly 90 percent of the total Communist Party membership in Western Europe is in France and Italy. The increasingly reformist character of the Italian and French parties has naturally made Moscow wary of the effect on Eastern Europe that greater liberalization and independence from the Soviet Union means. On occasion, the French Communists have criticized Moscow's treatment of political dissidents. They have also criticized the Soviets for implicitly endorsing the foreign policy of Giscard. It has not yet been determined in the West, however, whether liberalism and independence from Moscow do, in fact, mean the same thing.

A variety of factors which have contributed to the strength and influence of the French Communists include:

- economic recession and the role of the leftist parties as outsiders;
- detente between the Soviet Union and the West;
- the gap in income distribution between the rich and poor;
- the strength and effectiveness of Communist-controlled labor unions;
- a new generation which doesn't remember Stalin or Communist actions in Europe during and immediately after World War II;
- success in the administration of local governments in Le Havre, Nimes, the Paris suburbs, and elsewhere;
- the recent trend in the Party toward liberalism and independence from Moscow;
- traditional French suspicion of Atlanticism and fear of US domination;
- the success and increased legitimacy of the Communist Party in Italy; and,
- the decreasing influence of the Catholic Church in France.

The results of the French political development may be much more dramatic than the Italian situation. Italy's Communists seek a "historic compromise" with the right. They claim to seek no change in Italy's international position and demand no revolutionary action against the existing social and economic system. French Communists, on the other hand, are less interested in reform than in more fundamental changes in the entire political system. Although their foreign policy goals are less pro-Soviet and a little more nationalist than in the past, the PCF still strongly opposes NATO, Atlanticism, and European integration. They have also exploited anti-German sentiment in France in an effort to weaken institutions of European unity (such as NATO and the European Community) which are viewed as major obstacles to Communist goals and toward which the French, under Giscard's leadership, have become increasingly cooperative.

### THE FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY (PS)

The Socialist Party has gained disproportionately from its alliance with the Communists. While Communist strength has remained roughly the same or even sometimes decreased, the Socialists have made dramatic gains in recent elections. They have won between 30-35 percent of the vote, compared to between 17-20 percent for the Communists.

According to Daniel Bell, 5 percent of the Socialist voters are farmers, 6 percent are small businessmen, 7 percent higher management, 27 percent white collar, 35 percent workers, and 20 percent nonworking. The PS is much more middle-class bourgeoisie than the Communists, but a greater effort is being made to attract working-class members.<sup>14</sup> As a result of their electoral successes, the PS is now the leading party of the leftist coalition. Although the PS is creating a power base of its own, much of the party's success is the result of economic discontent and the personal popularity of Francois Mitterand.

The French Communists, with greater organizational discipline and membership stability, have unsuccessfully attempted to establish themselves in a leadership position over the Socialists among opposition leftists. They have become increasingly suspicious of the Socialists, whom they feel are moving more toward the political center. For their part, the Socialists were very disturbed over PCF support for the authoritarian Communists in Portugal. The PCF realizes, however, that

in the 1974 presidential elections, it was joint support of Mitterand which nearly brought about a leftist victory. They also realize that the Socialist vote is the key to a leftist victory in the 1978 parliamentary elections. The Socialists, on the other hand, have not yet been able to put together an effective national political machine. They must, therefore, depend largely on the well-disciplined, well-organized local Communist machinery during electoral campaigns in many areas of the country.<sup>15</sup>

### IMPLICATIONS OF A LEFTIST COALITION VICTORY

As a result of Mr. Chirac's transformation of the Gaullist party into a new, personalist mass movement called the "Rally for the Republic," fundamental changes can be expected in French politics prior to and subsequent to the presidential elections scheduled for 1981. George Marchais, French Communist leader, has stated that now the Communists may support their own candidate rather than a Socialist candidate in those elections.<sup>16</sup> Whether or not the left coalition or Giscard's center coalition survives, it seems clear that the stakes are high and further polarization between the left and right in France is bound to occur.

President Valery Giscard d'Estaing has pledged to remain in office until his current term expires in 1981, even if the Socialist-Communist alliance wins a majority in the 1978 parliamentary elections. His ability to effectively govern, however, would be seriously impaired. The Fifth Republic's Constitution did not envision the situation of a President with a politically hostile cabinet and Parliament.<sup>17</sup> He could install Francois Mitterand as Prime Minister, but this is not likely unless Mitterand breaks the alliance with the Communists. Giscard has ruled out any compromise with the Communists. According to Giscard,

to implement the programme of the left would bring great economic disorders. Communists in power will conform to their doctrine, which obviously does not endorse free enterprise, participation in NATO or the construction of a united Europe. Even if the Communists' language seems more moderate today, their basic principles remain the same.<sup>18</sup>

A victory of the left coalition does not automatically mean a Communist victory, however. There are many fundamental ideological and policy differences between the dominant Socialists and the Communists, even if they are aligned for electoral purposes. There is

some doubt that the Socialists will pursue many of the nationalizations and tax changes proposed in the Common Program, even if they do gain power. The Communists, however, will surely be there to insist on strict implementation.<sup>19</sup>

Mitterand insists that France could never accept the Soviet version of authoritarian Marxism-Leninism. Its goal, he says, is simply to reduce capitalism's power while "at the same time fully preserving freedom." He insists that he wants to keep France loyal to the Atlantic treaty until another security system can be devised. In fact, the Common Program calls for the simultaneous dissolution of both NATO and Warsaw Pact forces.<sup>20</sup>

Mitterand has sought to allay fears that a leftist victory in 1978 would make the government unworkable. A French government with significant Communist participation or effective control would inevitably have serious repercussions, however. Even though France is not a member of the NATO unified military commands, a French government with Communist participation would lead to further instability in the Atlantic Alliance. There would be serious military and political problems related to security of classified information and the reliability of forces.

It is likely that such a government, with Communist participation, would be less enthusiastic about the Common Market and European integration. Closer economic relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe would be probable. The Common Program calls for nationalization of all heavy industry, including the auto, steel, oil, transportation, aeronautical, and other industries. The effect upon Western economic stability could be serious if financial investors in France panic and money flees the country. The United States may be dragged into something close to a depression by a collapse in the interdependent economies of France, Italy, and Great Britain.

If the left is successful in Italy, France, and elsewhere, the US Congress may find it illogical to continue US support for a weakened NATO whose politicians and military forces may be less than dependable. Defense strategy for the United States and Western Europe would certainly have to be reevaluated.

Perhaps the greatest fear, especially in northern Europe, is that a weakened NATO and a less credible US defense commitment could lead the FRG toward heavier rearmament. Development of a more independent West German deterrent would greatly increase tensions everywhere in Europe. Germany's powerful and growing leadership role in Europe would certainly increase if a leftist victory occurs in France.

France, as one of the most technologically developed industrial nations in the world, would be likely to offer more favorable terms for its products and technology to Moscow. However, France is not likely in any sense to become a satellite of the Soviet Union. The long-range net effect of a French government with significant, meaningful Communist participation would be to shift the strategic balance decisively toward Moscow as the result of a weakened Atlantic Alliance, reduced reliability of French and other European military forces in the event of an attack from the East, likely economic dislocations throughout the West, the psychological blow to the United States and Western Europe, and the increased access of the Soviet Union to Western technology and industry.

A leftist coalition victory would, in reality, probably bring few immediate, dramatic changes to France. The left is likely to be initially cautious in order to avoid provoking a right-wing reaction. One observer has predicted that "if the left wins the next election, their room for maneuver is 1 percent more or less of the present programs."<sup>21</sup> Some important nationalizations are likely, but the Socialist majority would likely caution greater restraint in this regard to their Communist partners. A number of extraordinary economic measures may still be required to control the economic instability and flight of capital likely following a leftist victory.

Various analysts have predicted a major break between the Communists and Socialists after a leftist coalition victory. Others are certain the French military and rightists groups would seek to stage a coup. No one can accurately predict, however, the outcome of the inevitably complex situation which would result from a leftist coalition victory. Much may change between now and those 1978 parliamentary elections. Indeed, Mitterand may be able to fulfill his promise of responsibly leading France toward a Socialist society. Marchais may have been genuinely converted to democratic ideals, and he may fully cooperate with his Socialist partners. Evidence of the past and practical politics leads to skepticism, however.

#### US POLICY TOWARD A SOCIALIST FRANCE

The United States may not like certain political trends in France but there is little that realistically can be done about them. A leftist coalition government in France now appears likely by 1981, but it is not inevitable. The possibility, however, leads to a complex set of implications and options which need not automatically be disasterous.

The greatest mistake that US policymakers can make is to exaggerate the danger in advance, thereby leading to self-fulfilling prophecies. Various warnings and threats made recently by US public officials may serve positively to draw attention to leftist strength in southern Europe, but, especially in France, they inevitably provoke nationalist resentment and irritate the sensitivities of all Frenchmen. By limiting US options in advance, they tend to ensure a more difficult position for the United States if the Communists do acquire a share of the power in France. Such warnings also tend to have diminishing credibility if repeated too often and without other complementary policy actions. French Socialists may be cynical about such US warnings to beware of the Communists while US diplomats are in Moscow, Helsinki, and elsewhere seeking further accords with them in pursuit of a policy of detente.

A legitimately elected leftist coalition government in France would certainly test the skill and perhaps the patience of US diplomats. Mitterand claims to want good relations with the United States, probably partially as insurance against undue influence by Moscow over the coalition government through the French Communists. US suspicion, well-founded or not, is likely to be the greatest obstacle to an accommodation. The challenge to the United States will be to attempt to influence the new situation which has been created rather than simply to decry it. The ability to influence the situation at that point will probably be greater than the US ability to prevent its occurrence. The primary goal of US policy should be to prevent France from becoming anti-American and moving closer to the Soviet Union, and to support the preservation of democratic principles through economic policies, diplomatic recognition, and the like. French nationalism and traditions are strong enough so that a leftist coalition victory would by no means make such a movement toward the Soviet Union and authoritarianism certain.

Clearly the greatest fear of the United States should be a domino effect of Communist entry into governments throughout southern Europe. The Soviets, on the other hand, are afraid that more nationalist, liberal Western Communism will undermine the Breshevev Doctrine and Soviet control in Eastern Europe. The political divisions in Europe have been basically rigid since the end of World War II. That stability appears to be ending now despite the Helsinki agreements, and the result will be changes in the global balance of power. A weakening of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact is possible.

The Soviet Union would appear to be the most likely to gain from a move to the left in France, but major strategic gains are not inevitable unless either the United States refuses to deal with a leftist France, or unless the left, once in power, denies all the principles which brought the victory and readopts the philosophy of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Even then, the effect of such an action would be to rigidify old Cold War divisions in Europe and to make other nations throughout Europe and the Third World much more cautious of their own leftist parties and their politics. The backlash, together with a likely reaction in France itself, could lead to more embarrassment than gains for Moscow. It would almost certainly bring an end to detente and the technological and other benefits the Soviets have gained from the United States as a result. On balance, neither the United States nor the Soviets would gain much from such a dramatic reversal.

The most obvious but the most important conclusion resulting from a leftist coalition victory in France is that US security interests will suffer. US-French relations would be unlikely to remain as cordial as they have become under President Giscard d'Estaing, and US-French military cooperation would most likely end or be significantly reduced. Even if bilateral relations remain relatively good, US force planners and strategists will have to plan on defense policies in which French assistance, resources, and lines of communication would be less assured.

## ENDNOTES

1. "Ex-Premier Transforms Gaullists Into New Antileft Party at Rally," *The New York Times*, December 6, 1976, p. 1.
2. "Americans Cool to the French, But Its a Feeling That's Mutual," *The New York Times*, May 17, 1976, p. 12.
3. "The Panama Canal: Old Myths and New Realities," *The Defense Monitor*, August 1976, p. 5. From 1971-75, 43 French warships displacing 284,300 tons transited the Canal compared to 12 US warships displacing 2,700 tons.
4. "Soviet Navy's 'Fatal Weakness,'" *The Washington Post*, August 18, 1976, p. A24.
5. "Giscard, Before Congress, Stresses Ties," *The New York Times*, May 19, 1976, p. 2.
6. Daniel Southerland, "France Softens Stance on NATO," *Christian Science Monitor (Boston)*, October 20, 1976, p. 15.
7. Jacques Isnard, "France and NATO," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, February 15, 1976, p. 11.
8. Flora Lewis, "French Chief of Staff Backs NATO Tie in Case of War," *The New York Times*, June 3, 1976, p. 3.
9. Robert R. Ropelewski, "French Push Updated Conventional Forces," *Aviation Week*, June 14, 1976, pp. 21-22.
10. Roy C. Macridis, "The New French Maginot Line: A Note on French Strategy," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Spring, 1974, p. 105.
11. Robert Dorang, "A Shaky Economy Fosters the French Left," *Business Week*, October 4, 1976, p. 28.
12. Flora Lewis, "Poll Shows French Reds Gain Support in Campaign of Change," *The New York Times*, May 31, 1976, p. 3.
13. Don Cook, "Communists Await Italian Results," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 17, 1976, p. 16A.
14. Daniel S. Bell, "The Parti-Socialiste in France," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, June 1975, pp. 426-427.
15. Jim Hoagland, "French Set Nationalism Above Ideology," *The Washington Post*, September 21, 1976, p. 14.
16. "Ex-Premier Transforms Gaullists Into New Antileft Party at Rally," *The New York Times*, December 6, 1976, p. 1.
17. "Giscard Asserts He'll Stay in Post," *The New York Times*, June 29, 1976, p. 9.
18. "President Giscard Worried by Italian Communists," *Times of London*, May 11, 1976, p. 9.
19. Hoagland, "French Set Nationalism Above Ideology," p. 14.
20. C. L. Sulzberger, "Not Dogma or Religion," *The New York Times*, May 19, 1976, p. 41.
21. Jim Hoagland, "Superpowers Wary of Disturbing Spheres of Influence," *The Washington Post*, September 23, 1976, p. A3.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arkes, Hadley. "Democracy and European Communism." *Commentary*, Vol. 61, May 1976, pp. 38-47.

Bell, Daniel S. "The Parti Socialiste in France." *Journal of Common Market Studies*, June 1975, pp. 419-431.

Berger, Suzanne. *The French Political System*. New York: Random House, 1974.

Bonnemaison, Antoine. *The Social Conflict in France*. London: The Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1975.

Brezet, F.E., Commander. "The French Navy: New Raison d'etre." *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 101, March 1975, pp. 32-42.

Brower, Daniel R. *The New Jacobins, The French Communist Party and the Popular Front*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968.

Charlton, Sue Ellen M. *The French Left and European Integration*. Denver: University of Denver, 1972.

Fejto, Francois. *The French Communist Party and the Crisis of International Communism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1967.

Fontaine, Andre. "Shadows Over France." *International Review*, Vol. 3, Winter 1974, pp. 14-18.

"France." *The Military Balance, 1976-1977*. London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976.

Hoaglund, Jim. "French Set Nationalism Above Ideology." *The Washington Post*, September 21, 1976, pp. 1, 14.

Hoaglund, Jim. "Red's Respectability Rising." *The Washington Post*, September 19, 1976, pp. 1, 16.

Hoaglund, Jim. "Superpowers Wary of Disturbing Spheres of Influence." *The Washington Post*, September 23, 1976, p. A3.

Joire-Noulens, Amiral. "Quelle Marine et pour quoi faire des le temps de paix?" *Defense Nationale* (Paris), July 1976, pp. 21-42.

Kanapa, Jean. "A 'New Policy' of the French Communists?" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 55, January 1977, pp. 280-294.

Lewis, Flora. "Poll Shows French Reds Gain Support in Campaign of Change." *The New York Times*, May 31, 1976, p. 3.

Mery, G. General. "Une Armee pour Quoi Faire et Comment?" *Defense Nationale* (Paris), June 1976, pp. 11-34.

Penneman, Howard R., ed. *France at the Polls, the Presidential Election of 1974*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975.

Pfaff, William. "Reflections—Post Marxist Europe." *New Yorker*, Vol. 51, January 12, 1976, pp. 76-81.

Pierce, Roy. *French Politics and Political Institutions*. New York: Harper & Row, 1968.

Simmons, Harvey G. *French Socialists in Search of a Role, 1956-1967*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970.

## OTHER RECENTLY PUBLISHED MEMORANDA

Detente, National Security, and Multinational Corporations	AD A013014
Nonconsonant Detente and NATO	AD A013522
Deterrence and Detente	AD A013979
The Impact of Crises on the Evolution of Strategy and Forces in an Era of Detente	AD A014158
The Terror Trap	AD A014159
Collective Defense, Neutralization, and the Balance of Power: Contending Security Policies in Southeast Asia	AD A015464
Precision Guided Munitions: Implications for Detente	AD A015465
Chile, 1964-74: The Successes and Failures of Reformism	AD A015466
International Leadership in an Era of Detente	AD A015467
Detente and the Eastern Mediterranean	AD A016859
Terrorism and the Military Response	AD A016860
The Prospects of Soviet American Alliance	AD A016884
A Fifth Round in the Middle East? Western European Perceptions	AD A017049
Nuclear Strategy for Defending a Border	AD A017050
Being Number One Nation: Primacy and Detente	AD A017794
Interests and Strategies in an Era of Detente: An Overview	AD A019091
The Relevance of Civilian Based Defense to US Security Interests	AD A020178

Copies of any of these memoranda may be obtained from the Defense Documentation Center. The request, indicating title and AD number, should be sent to the following address:

Defense Documentation Center  
Cameron Station  
Alexandria, VA 22314

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER ACN 77042	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) A NEW LOOK AT FRANCE: US DEFENSE INTERESTS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Military Issues Research Memorandum
7. AUTHOR(s) Kenneth E. Roberts		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Strategic Studies Institute US Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS		12. REPORT DATE 10 November 1977
		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 20
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED
		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)  Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)  France; French political environment; NATO relationships; Socialist Party; Communist Party.		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)  This memorandum considers the rapid political and economic changes in France which could fundamentally affect NATO and relationships with the United States. Recent polls have indicated increased support for a leftist coalition, while at the same time a new phase of French politics is developing with the coales- cence of the anti-left Gaullist block into a mass movement behind former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac. Attention is being focused on parliamentary elections in 1978 and the presidential election for 1981. The author concludes that,		

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE(When Data Entered)

whatever the course of events, US policy should be to prevent France from becoming anti-American and moving closer to the Soviet Union, and to support the preservation of democratic principles through economic and diplomatic policies.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE(When Data Entered)

## DISTRIBUTION

ODCSOPS, DA	6
National War College	3
Naval War College	2
Air War College	4
Air University	3
Command and General Staff College	2
Armed Forces Staff College	1
Industrial College of the Armed Forces	2
Inter-American Defense College	1
University of National Defense	1
Defense Intelligence School	1
US Military Academy	2
Marine Corps Development and Education Command	3
National Defence College	1
Royal College of Defense Studies	1
L'Ecole Superieure de Guerre	1
Fuehrungskademie der Bundeswehr	1
NATO Defence College	1
Concepts Analysis Agency	2
Intelligence Threat Analysis Detachment	1
Training and Doctrine Command	1
Combined Arms Combat Development Activity	1
Studies, Analysis, and Gaming Agency	1
Office of the Chief of Engineers	1
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency	1
Defense Intelligence Agency	2
Central Intelligence Agency	3
Department of State	2
Defense Logistics Studies Information Exchange	1
Institute for Military Assistance	1
US Army Federal Executive Fellow, Brookings Institution	1
US Navy	2
US Marine Corps	2
US Air Force	3
432d Military Intelligence Detachment	1
434th Military Intelligence Detachment	1
467th Military Intelligence Detachment	1
I ROTC Region Headquarters	1
II ROTC Region Headquarters	1
III ROTC Region Headquarters	1
IV ROTC Region Headquarters	1
National Guard Bureau	1
Defense Documentation Center	12
Army Library	1
Military History Research Collection	1
Army War College	57